International Seed Treaty

1035. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Ministe-AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether experts have welcomed the International Seed Treaty;

(b) if so, whether there are scrap patents on 64 major food crops;

(c) whether this treaty will end disputes over genetic resources;

(d) if so, to what extent small farmers in developing nations will gain from this treaty; and

(e) to what extent, it has been helpful for India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA); (a) The experts have generally welcomed the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture also popularly known as International Seed Treaty. This Treaty is a positive steps forward in the conservation and sustainable utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA).

(b) The multi-lateral access provided in the treaty includes 35 food crops and 29 forages.

(c) to (e) The treaty provides for multilateral access. The contributions of farmers in regard to Plant Genetic Resources for Food & Agriculture are recognized. Equitable benefits sharing from the utilization of Plant Genetic Resources is also provided. Indian researchers will have access to the germplasm of improved crop varieties available with other member countries under the multilateral system.

New Agriculture Policy

1036. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate a new Agriculture Policy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Economic opportunities in agriculture

1037. PROF. ALKABALRAM KSHATRIYA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of recently held conference on US-India partnership Creating Economic Opportunities in Agriculture organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry;

(b) if so, the main points discussed in the conference; and

(c) the steps both countries have taken to improve agricultural tie-up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Government was not associated with the Conference. However, according to the information provided by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CM), the main points discussed in the conference were:

- Food and agriculture as a critical part of the US-India strategic alliance
- The historical cooperation between US and agricultural universities in India
- Improvement in the planting material, promotion of bio-technology, focus on value added products and improvement in infrastructure
- Tie-up between Indian and American companies for mutual benefit in the field of agriculture

(c) An Indo-US Sub-Commission on Agriculture was constituted in 1980. An Agreement on Cooperation in Agricultural Sciences was signed in 1996.